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Forest Service NEWS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ANALYSIS SHOWS DECLINE IN WESTERN SPRUCE BUDWORM OUTBREAKS

PORTLAND, February 14--Biological evaluations indicate that current outbreaks of the western spruce budworm are on the decline throughout most of the National Forests in the Pacific Northwest.

"We still have some hot spots with visible defoliation on the National Forests, but in most places the defoliation will be light," said Jim Hadfield, Operations Group Leader. "This means that it will not be necessary to apply insecticides in 1989 on most locations now under study."

Final plans for suppressing budworm outbreaks this year are pending the results of an environmental analysis (EA). Most areas have been dropped from further consideration because of the western spruce budworm population decline. Upon completion of the EA, the Forest Service will decide what treatment, if any, will still be necessary for 1989.

A "pheromone sampling system" recently developed by the US Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station was used to monitor western spruce budworm moth populations. Predictions were based on the number of male moths caught in traps. Factors that have contributed to the decline in budworm populations this year include the effective treatment in 1988 of over 600,000 acres; natural regulating factors such as parasites, predators, and adverse weather; and a weakening of populations as they begin to age and place too much demand on their food supply.
